

INTRODUCTORY AND HISTORICAL 39

"I begin with my personal servant Changzhi, whom I have⁵⁷ had for twenty-five years. His father was the first servant engaged on first coming to Kalimpong. In almost every characteristic he was an older edition of the son. He was with us until his death in 1912, when the son, then at the-
lough, succeeded him. The first characteristic of Changzhi his honesty and truthfulness. In all these years I have ever known him tell a lie to me or take anything that was not his own. I have never kept anything locked up from him, nor in matters of money kept an account of what I have entrusted to him: he did that. He would never take anything for himself without being told by me to do so, and I have known him disobey me in this in cases when he thought it was for my interest to keep something a little longer. I have, of course, known Lepcha servants who could not have been treated in this way; but I believe that Europeans in our district trust the Lepchas generally. If they fail, I believe that it is not infrequently through taking alcoholic liquors. On the other hand, I have known Nepalese domestics who have been quite trustworthy. The failures have been more numerous than among the Lepchas, and here again drink⁷³³ has been still more frequently the cause. Among the young Nepali men in the towns, it is pathetic how many who had promising futures have been ruined through drink.

"Another characteristic of the Lepchas is their generous²⁴¹ and charitable nature: Changzhi shares this to the full. The⁵⁷⁴ fact that they lived an isolated life among the forests of the⁷³⁵ Himalayas before the Nepalese invaded their sanctuary made them interdependent. They were not good farmers and their agricultural implements were primitive. Their dependence upon forest roots and fruits, which were got free by the labour of their hands, encouraged the gospel of sharing; and they share everything. Shortly after we came to India we tried by our 'Young Men's Society' to develop an interest in social questions. One night the subject was debt and the cause of it among the Lepchas. One man said that in his opinion it arose through their stomachs: 'In the

241 olden days our fathers got their food from the forest; but
574 times change; forest regulations were framed against us, and
735 we had to buy our food. When friends called we could not
refrain from sharing what we had with them, with the result
that our year's store got consumed before the new crop was
ready, and we had to go to the mahajan's shop and take it
from him at an exorbitant rate of interest; and before we
realised it we had become his slaves for life. There were no
government rules against disposing of our land to others.
We Lepchas were poor and we had to sell to the more
thrifty Nepalese at a ridiculously low price.'

241 "That is how much of the Lepchas' land was acquired
425 by Nepalese. Rules preventing the transfer to Nepalese
except by the personal ruling of the Deputy Commissioner
have largely stopped this evil. The Lepchas, however, have
learned much from the Nepalese as to the tillage of the
land, and many of them are now quite as good farmers as
their instructors.

484 "Another incident occurs to me from the 'Young Men's'
415 meetings on much the same subject. The point I would give
574 is on the reasons why the Nepalese are still, as then, more
thrifty than the Lepchas. One young man said: 'Have you
ever seen the different sizes of the cooking vessels used by the
Lepchas and the Nepalese on a journey? The Lepcha carries
one which could cook for a family and will share with any
fellow-traveller in need; the Nepali carried a little pot just
sufficient for his own use; and even if his father were beside
him he would not ask him to take a little.'

"This was doubtless an exaggeration; but speaking
generally it does reveal an undoubted difference between
the two peoples.

782 "Another fruitful cause of poverty among the Lepchas is
[735] their sacrifice of cattle and fowls on the advice of their
priests in times of illness. Until that is stopped by the
deliverance from the fear of evil spirits the Lepchas will
remain poor. I have known it in times of prolonged and
frequent illness in a family that every animal they have was